

TOWN COUNCIL WEEKLY STATUS REPORT

November 3, 2016

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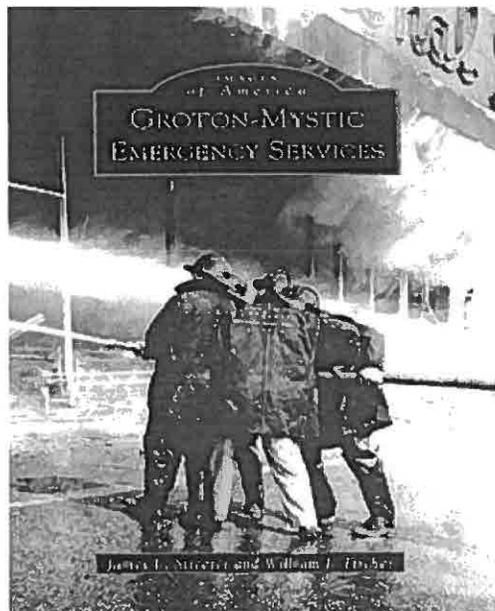
UPCOMING MEETINGS

- Wednesday, November 9th, Town Council Committee of the Whole, 6:00 p.m., Town Hall Annex , CR1
- Wednesday, November 9th, RTM, 7:30 p.m., Groton Senior Center

TOWN OFFICES CLOSED

Please be advised that all Groton Town offices will be closed in observance of Veterans' Day on Friday, November 11th. Please enjoy the upcoming holiday with your friends and family.

GROTON-MYSTIC EMERGENCY SERVICES BOOK SIGNING



Former Town Mayor, Town Councilor, retired City of Groton Police Officer, current Town Historian and RTM member, James Streeter, and retired City of Groton Fire Captain, William Fischer, will be signing a copy of their newly released pictorial book "Groton-Mystic Emergency Services" on the following dates:

- November 5th 12:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m. at the Groton Public Library’s Author Festival
- November 6th 10:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m. at All Bright K-9, Route 85 Colchester
- November 12th 9:00 a.m. – 2:30 p.m. at Fitch High School for the Booster Club
- November 28th 6:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m. at Bill Memorial Library with a presentation
- December 10th 6:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m. at Par Four for the Public Safety Night

This book covers all 23 of Groton’s past and present emergency services departments, including fire departments (municipal, government and industrial); police (Town, City, Groton Long Point and State) and ambulance services (Groton and Mystic), L&M Paramedics and Dispatch.

Copies of the book will be available for purchase at each event. A portion of the book sales will be donated to the Bridgeport Burn Center. In addition, royalties from the book will be donated to the Salvation Army’s Canteen Truck.

BUMPERS N’ BOOKS

The Junior Friends of the Groton Public Library, in conjunction with the Groton Town Police, held their annual Bumpers N’ Books event on Saturday, October 26th. More than 400 people gathered in the Library’s parking lot to view the decorated car trunks in book related themes and to receive treats. Some of the trunk themes this year included Charlotte’s Web, Harry Potter, Pinkalicious and Frog and Toad. The amount of people in attendance doubled from last year’s event.



GROTON SENIOR CENTER VEHICLE

The Groton Senior Center received a new 21 passenger van last week through a Federal 5310 Transportation Grant managed by the State Department of Transportation. The 5310 grants provide 80% of the cost of vehicles and focus on enhanced mobility for seniors and individuals with disabilities. This larger van is handicapped accessible and will allow those seniors to participate in trips they were unable to do like grocery shopping, department store shopping and travel events.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Attachment 1 is an October 2016 update on Groton Economic Development projects from the Office of Planning and Development Services.

MONTHLY REPORTS

1. Office of Planning and Development (September):

- Planning staff held pre-construction meetings for a new 22 unit apartment building in the Long Meadow Landing complex and the new Savings Institute building on Route 1.
- Staff attended a kick off meeting for a Parks and Recreation study to determine the best location for a bike path connecting the G&S Trolley Trail and Thomas Road.
- Staff is working with the Public Works Department to craft an ordinance that bans illicit discharges to the Town's stormwater system.
- The Zoning Commission has been working collaboratively with Groton Utilities to update the Water Resource Protection District regulations.
- The Airport Development Zone application has been officially submitted to the Connecticut Department of Economic and Community Development.

Attachments

MRO/lh

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DIVISION UPDATE

October 2016

The following summarizes economic development division activities for October 2016.

Economic Development Activities:

- Airport Development Zone (ADZ): Staff provided additional information to DECD as requested. Staff held a meeting with GOSA to explain the program upon their request. ADZ approval is anticipated in 2016.
- Great Blue Research Survey: The report has been finalized for the two surveys (residential/consumer and business). Distribution of the report will first be to the Town Council and RTM and then to the Boards/Commissions and public.
- Public Property Redevelopment (517/529 Gold Star Highway): Proposals were received on October 17th and meetings have been held involving internal review plus Executive Session with Town Council.
- Public Property Redevelopment (Mystic Oral School): Staff continues to market and promote the property including fielding responses to inquiries. Scheduled meeting with DECD to tour property and finalize program. Property showings from the exterior are occurring.
- Public Property Redevelopment (Groton Heights): Staff has gained access to the building and has completed a walk-through. Discussions and showings with potential developers is ongoing. Meeting scheduled with the City to address zoning.
- Marketing/Website: Staff has coordinated with Camoin in drafting the RFP for the new economic development web. Camoin will assist with this effort. This will be released in early December. The new website will be an attractive stand-alone web with key features including video, social media, mapping and a brand for Groton.
- CT Next – Innovation Places: Groton has been working with SPARK, CURE, New London and City of Groton on a project targeting grant funding from CT Next. \$50,000 in state grant funds was just awarded to the effort. Internal meetings occur weekly.
- Tax Increment Financing (TIF): Staff continued working on the TIF initiative focusing on a plan for Groton and also a specific development to be located at the intersection of 117/184. Staff addressed the need to first educate Groton regarding TIF and target key growth areas such as 117/184 as well as Downtown Groton and Groton's Thames Street Waterfront. Next steps are to further refine the future TIF districts then work with the developer in moving his mixed used project forward including nearly 400 housing units, retail and office.
- Incentives: Staff continues to develop an easy-to-use document to help with business inquiries. Content has been in the works and a format has been finalized.
- Community Wayfinding Signage: Staff has developed a listing of sign plan contractors, researched quality RFPs, and began drafting the Groton RFP. It will be issued in December.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DIVISION UPDATE

October 2016

- Economic Assistance Fund: Draft revisions to the program guidelines will be presented to the EDC Economic Assistance Fund Task Force in October.
- Northeast Corridor EIS: Staff addressed the Town Council twice on this project specific to the federal process specific to the alternatives and maps presented by the Federal Rail Authority (FRA).

Meetings/Outreach:

- Staff participated meetings/conversations with partner agencies including CT Department of Economic and Community Development (DECD), seCTer, CERC, Eastern CT Chamber, Greater Mystic Chamber, Groton Business Association, U.S. Senator Chris Murphy's Office (Emily Borshee). Also, staff attended the Southern New England American Planning Association Conference from October 20-21.

- Staff participated in a SEC TV event "Mystic Matters" on October 4th.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WEPdL7FJ33U>

- Staff interaction with businesses included positive communications with prospects and existing businesses. There were about 36 recorded inquiries and communications with businesses in September. The most notable includes working with the Argia Cruises to relocate the business to Groton at Steamboat Wharf.

OFFICE OF PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

September 2016

DEPARTMENT UPDATES

The Planning Division held pre-construction meetings for a new 22 unit apartment building in the Long Meadow Landing complex off of South Road and for the new Savings Institute building at The Marketplace Plaza on Route 1.

OPDS staff attended a kick off meeting for a Parks and Recreation study to determine the best location for a bike path that connects the G&S Trolley Trail to Thomas Road.

The department is working with the Department of Public Works to craft an ordinance that bans illicit discharges to the town's stormwater system. The ordinance is required as part of the town's stormwater permit.

Staff gave a presentation with a developer to the Town Council Committee of the Whole regarding Tax Increment Financing (TIF).

COMMISSION HIGHLIGHTS

Zoning Commission

The Commission has been working collaboratively with Groton Utilities to update the Water Resource Protection District regulations. Groton Utilities has let the Commission know that they appreciate the opportunity to actively participate in the process and anticipate a regulation that will protect the drinking water supply without unduly suppressing development.

ECONOMIC & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Airport Development Zone (ADZ): The ADZ application has been officially submitted to the CT DECD. The analysis is now being reviewed and will be run through the state's REMI (Regional Economic Model, Inc.) as a part of their approval process. Approval is anticipated in 2016.

Public Property Redevelopment: 517/529 Gold Star Highway is the top public property priority for redevelopment. An RFP was released and proposals are due on Monday, October 17th. Other secondary priorities include Groton Heights and Mystic Oral School. Development interest in both of these properties has been consistently growing.

Great Blue Research Survey: The draft report was received summarizing the results from the two surveys (consumer/residential and business). Formatting edits are being made to the draft report in preparation of a formal release to the Town in October. Additionally, there will be presentations of the results made to both the Town Council and RTM in the near future.

GREAT BLUE RESIDENTIAL & BUSINESS TELEPHONE SURVEY COMPLETED

Project Description & Goals

The primary goal of this research study among Groton residents and businesses study was to assess current perceptions of the Town, drivers and barriers to increased visitation or patronage, and priorities for future economic development initiatives.

Some Key Findings

- ◇ Residents and businesses agreed that increasing business development incentives and management of tax rates are priorities for economic development.
- ◇ Nearly all residents (95.5%) reported staying in Groton for business, pleasure, and recreation either "often" or "occasionally," with fewer residents reporting they conduct similar activities outside of Groton. The most common reason reported for leaving Groton was "shopping".
- ◇ Among business owners, only 33.7% reported being aware of incentives and tax breaks.
- ◇ Most residents (86.9%) reported the quality of life in Groton as "excellent" or "good".
- ◇ When considering developments that could increase patronage and commerce in Groton, residents and businesses resoundingly agreed that "arts/entertainment" would accomplish these goals. There was also agreement that "moderately priced restaurants" and "night life/leisure locations" would stimulate commerce, and residents felt they would be more likely to visit Groton if there were more "fitness/outdoor/indoor recreation" establishments.

INSPECTION SERVICES DIVISION HIGHLIGHTS

- ◇ Total building fees collected for FYE 2017 less reimbursements: \$92,183
- ◇ A building permit was issued for the construction of a Savings Institute Bank in the plaza at 970 Poquonnock Road. The project consists of the demolition of the kiosk in the front parking area and the construction of a streamlined bank branch emphasizing interactive consumer banking.
- ◇ A remodeling project is underway at Wendy's, located at 687 Long Hill Road, while interior renovations continue across the street at 688 Long Hill Road for the expected Spring 2017 opening of Aldi's. At 52 Newtown Road renovations of interior spaces are beginning at the Groton Public Library.
- ◇ Signage projects have begun at several locations throughout Town to reface existing or install new signs.

ITEM	RECEIVED IN SEPTEMBER	FISCAL YEAR 2017 TOTAL
BUILDING PERMITS	38	143
ELECTRICAL PERMITS	27	83
PLUMBING PERMITS	15	37
MECHANICAL PERMITS	40	86
SPRINKLER PERMIT	2	3
MOBILE HOME PERMITS	0	1
ESTIMATED VALUE	2,491,336	
RESIDENTIAL PERMITS ISSUED—NEW	1	6
ESTIMATED VALUE	193,000	915,000
RESIDENTIAL ADDITIONS/ALTERATIONS	29	99
NEW COMMERCIAL PERMITS	1	2
COMMERCIAL ADDITIONS	6	14
SIGNS	5	9
POOL PERMITS	0	0
SHED PERMITS	1	3
SINGLE FAMILY/DUPLEX UNITS APPROVED	0	14
TOTAL FEES COLLECTED (less reimbursements)	25,849	
CERTIFICATES OF OCCUPANCY ISSUED	5	32
HDC CERTIFICATES OF APPROPRIATENESS	5	16
CODE ENFORCEMENT		
SIGN VIOLATIONS	0	0
VEHICLES/WASTE	2	5
OTHER ENFORCEMENT ACTIONS	0	0
PENDING LITIGATION	2	4
CASES RESOLVED	2	9
BLIGHT CODE	5	10